

PERSBERICHT

## Pioneer of post-war Japanese art at Museum Cobra *Kishio Suga – Where Both Sides Meet*

28 June to 26 October 2025

Museum Cobra in Amstelveen presents this summer the first solo exhibition in the Netherlands by the groundbreaking Japanese sculptor and installation artist Kishio Suga (Morioka, 1944). "Museum Cobra in Amstelveen invites audiences to discover groundbreaking art from across the globe," says director Suzanne Wallinga. "Suga is a key figure within Japan's Mono-ha movement, in which natural and industrial materials take on new meaning and the line between man, nature and art blurs." *Kishio Suga – Where Both Sides Meet* is on view from June 28 through October 26, 2025.



Kishio Suga, *In the State of Equal Dimension*, 1973, C-print. © Kishio Suga, BLUM and Mendes Wood DM

### Sculptures made of everyday materials

Stones, pieces of wood, wire and found branches: they sometimes seem almost thoughtlessly arranged, but that is certainly not the case. Kishio Suga's minimalist sculptures and installations are discrete and composed of everyday materials. Suga places emphasis on the physical qualities of these materials as well as their relationship towards each other and connection to the environment. This use of found, natural mate-

rials combined with the philosophical emphasis on space and impermanence brought the Mono-ha movement onto the international map in the mid-1960s. The artists broke rigorously with traditional, and figurative art-making and processed their unease and disillusionment with postwar modernity in Japan in their own unique way.

### **Sculptures made of everyday materials**

Stones, pieces of wood, wire and found branches: they sometimes seem almost thoughtlessly arranged, but that is certainly not the case. Kishio Suga's minimalist sculptures and installations are discrete and composed of everyday materials. Suga places emphasis on the physical qualities of these materials as well as their relationship towards each other and connection to the environment. This use of found, natural materials combined with the philosophical emphasis on space and impermanence brought the Mono-ha movement onto the international map in the mid-1960s. The artists broke rigorously with traditional, and figurative art-making and processed their unease and disillusionment with postwar modernity in Japan in their own unique way.



*Gathering and Territory—S*, 1995/2017, detail. Foto: Joshua White/JWPictures.com. © Kishio Suga, BLUM en Mendes Wood DM

### **Art, ecology and philosophy**

Suga's works are still relevant today as the question of how humans and the earth relate to each other is

of the utmost importance. At a time when the focus on sustainability is increasing, more and more people are choosing to use natural materials and to reuse and repair used goods. “With this exhibition, Museum Cobra aims not only to introduce Suga’s radical work to the Dutch public, but also to contribute to a dialogue about art, ecology and philosophy,” says Suzanne Wallinga, curator of the exhibition. She worked closely with Ashley Rawlings, who specialises in postwar Japanese and Korean art. Rawlings provided essential historical context and guidance on the installation of Suga’s works. The artist himself is also involved in the composition and design of both the exhibition in Amstelveen and the solo exhibition opening simultaneously in Dia: Beacon, USA.

### Iconic works

This exhibition fits perfectly with Museum Cobra’s ambition to highlight the enduring relevance of experiential art. The entire top floor of the museum is filled with Suga’s large-scale installations, or ‘situations’, as he himself describes them. As a visitor, you step into his muted world, as it were. Iconic signature works like *Standing* (1969) and *Units of Dependency* (1974), are presented, complemented by wall works, photographs, notebooks and documentary material. Personal notebooks explain Suga’s ways of seeing and working, shedding light on the joyful and colourful side of his works. Video registrations of live performances illustrate his sense of humour. *Kishio Suga – Where Both Sides Meet* invites you to reconsider the role of materials and the mutual correspondence between everything that exists.



*Kishio Suga, Progression of Space, October 4, 1980. Activation: Kaneko Art Gallery, Tokyo, Japan, 1980. Photo: Tasaku Kaneko © Kishio Suga, BLUM and Mendes Wood DM*

**About Kishio Suga**

Kishio Suga studied at Tama Art University in Tokyo and then started 'fieldwork': ephemeral arrangements of natural and man-made materials in outdoor locations around Tokyo. He has translated these works to indoor spaces. He soon gained recognition for pioneering works such as *Parallel Strata* (1969) and *Soft Concrete* (1970). Alongside these, Suga makes precisely constructed wall assemblages and works on paper that have a quality of investigation. Besides various performance works, he has written three novels, a film screenplay and more than 150 essays. His work has been shown in Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, the Guggenheim Museum in New York and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. He has had several solo exhibitions in international museums, including the He Art Museum (Foshan, China, 2024), Dia: Chelsea, (New York, 2016-17) and Pirelli HangarBicocca, (Milaan, 2016). A recreation of his iconic installation *Law of Situation* (1971) was presented at the 57th Venice Biennale in 2017.

The exhibition features a public programme including creative workshops and in-depth lectures, a bilingual catalogue (Dutch/English) and the screening of Suga's detective film *Being and Murder* (1999).

More information: [museumcobra.nl](https://museumcobra.nl)

---

[End of message]

---

For more information and/or visual materials, please contact:

**Marita Smit**

[pers@cobra-museum.nl](mailto:pers@cobra-museum.nl)

+31 (0)6 2000 10 83

[www.museumcobra.nl](https://www.museumcobra.nl)